

The cutting of pictures from backs of magazines, and arranging them in a scrap-book made of paper cambric never fails to entertain. Colored pencils help out. A nurse caring for children should be able to help fill in this period with stories and jingles she has learned, or can read. Then there is the making of soldier caps or a fleet of paper boats which greatly attracts; and simple games to be played with a pencil.

However, no form of entertainment should be continued long enough to tire, and periods of rest and quiet must be insisted upon. The nurse who succeeds in winning the confidence and love of the children, in whatever stage of illness she is with them, has scored a large point in her success in the care of them. Let us be willing to do anything which will accomplish the greatest good for the child, and honor our profession by becoming more and more efficient in our ability to care for sick children.

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### THE HOME-SCHOOL FOR PRIVATE NURSES \*

BY M<sup>LE</sup>. L. CHAPTAL

Directress of the School

It is not without some sense of emotion that I address you to-day. It is the first time, in France, that an audience of this kind has been gathered together. For the first time, in France, we as nurses, are called to participate in a movement to which up till now we have appeared to remain indifferent.

I say intentionally "have appeared," for we have not been so in reality—as the papers that you have just heard read have proved. No, our country is never the last when it is a question of devotion to duty, and we can recall traditions of noble work accomplished by the nursing profession in France. But, alas, there are, even in the most brilliant histories, moments of eclipse. We have traversed one of these moments, and if to-day I am moved in speaking to you, it is because once again the sun seems about to reappear from behind the clouds, to revive us with the warmth of his rays.

After the striking report of Mme. Alphen-Salvador—who has been the first in Paris to restore the nurse to that place in the social scale to which she has the right—it may seem that there can be nothing left for me to say to you. It may seem also that the school which has been founded by her renders all other private foundations useless and superfluous; but, to limit ourselves in such a large city as Paris to one type of school, superior though it may be, would be to strangely contract the

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\* Read at the International Council on Nursing, Paris, June 18, 1907.

field of action which is ours, and that of our colleagues. Since the beginning of the century, each year has seen the development of new work—founded with the same aim.

It was in 1904, that the Home-school for Nurses—of which I am going to speak—was founded, through the initiative of a woman whose illustrious name is honored by all. I speak of Mme. Taine. Profoundly impressed by the idea that the care of the sick was being more and more abandoned by the right class of French women, Mme. Taine was led to ask herself if this deviation from the path of duty had not its origin in a misunderstanding. In this country, the general opinion had so long been, that to be a nurse implied the taking of the position of an inferior; and that to direct the ward of a hospital, or to be entrusted with the care of a sick person in a private family, it was necessary to wear the garb of a nun. Consequently, it was the name of “nurse”—so noble and so great in itself—that it was necessary to revive. Now we know that “the habit does not make the monk,” any more than a name makes a thing; but how greatly it helps towards it! From thence, the foundation of the Home-school, which has for its object the actual solving of the problem.

Those to whom Mme. Taine spoke of her scheme—the regretted Princess de Wagram, the Baroness James de Rothschild, her sister, and amongst the doctors, Dr. Maurice Letulle—looked at it from the same point of view as herself: they were convinced from the outset, that nothing ought to be left undone, in order to put it into practice. It was from the very beginning that Mme. Taine confided her scheme to us—convinced that our ideas would be the same as hers (as they had never ceased to be during several years in which we had collaborated in work of another kind).

A residence being found, the school was opened at the beginning of 1905, in a quarter sufficiently central—as far as the hospitals are concerned—to allow of the pupils going backward and forward to their daily duties.

The Rue Vercingétorix is situated at an almost equal distance from all the large hospitals of the “Assistance Publique,” which do duty for the left side of the Seine; Laënnec, Necker, Broussais, Cochin and Boucicaut for the adults; the “Maternité” and the “Clinique Tarnier,” for women; the “Enfants Assistés” and the “Enfants Malades,” for children, and lastly, the Pasteur Hospital for infectious diseases. And it is in these different hospitals, with their infinite variety of wards and unlimited number of patients, that the professional studies of the pupils of the Home-school have been made daily during the last two and a half years.

Lectures in theory are given every week at the school by several of the doctors and surgeons of the hospitals. These lectures provide the pupils with the necessary technical instruction, without ever superceding or taking precedence of the practical part of their duties, carried out at the bedside of the sick in the wards of the hospitals. The pupils spend four hours every morning and two afternoons each week (altogether about forty hours a week) working in the hospitals. Their successive stages last for two years, and take them through all the different wards of the hospitals, both general and special, *i.e.*, medical and surgical wards (first adult, then children), maternity wards (learning the care of mothers and their new-born infants), each taking four months. In addition, one month is passed at the Pasteur Hospital for the practical study of the nursing of contagious diseases, their mode of disinfection, etc.; two months for the management of nervous patients, and several weeks besides in other specialities such as eye, ear and throat hospitals, etc.

A monitress, attached to the school, follows the pupils through their various stages, puts them "*au courant*," inspects their work, acting always *in accordance* with the doctors and sisters of the wards. It is the duty of this monitress to render to us an exact account of the progress made, and of the difficulties encountered. The great courtesy shown by the doctors, and the perfect cordiality which exists between our pupils and the members of the staff, enable us to make a fair estimate of all that concerns the work of the pupil at hospital. At the end of each stage the doctors who have watched the pupils at work in their wards give them (after consulting with the head nurse) an "*appreciation*," or short report on their work, which is entered in the daily attendance book of the pupil. It is this attendance book, thus endorsed by the doctors and signed daily by the "*surveillantes*" (head nurses), which enables us to bestow upon the pupil at the end of her two years' study the certificate which represents the diploma (the medical committee of the school making use of this means to avoid the stumbling-block of a purely theoretical examination of which the *least* disadvantage is to direct the efforts of the pupils in exercising their memory—as students—rather than to the exercise of the practical part of their duties as nurses).

I must add that the training at the school includes a course on invalid cookery, and that a certain amount of housework is expected of all the pupils.

As to the moral part of the teaching, it is given by a delegate of the committee. I feel some diffidence in entering into details on this subject, but I may say that lectures are given once a week on general

ethics, especially dwelling upon those points which refer to the professional life and character of a nurse.

I am glad to notice that both in the method employed in arranging the successive stages, and in the moral program of the school, we find ourselves in accord with the ideas of our colleagues in other countries. Indeed, I have been more than once struck in reading the very interesting *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING* to find there expressed the very same ideals that we have always held.

It only remains now to speak of the financial side of the work. Here again the name of the Baroness James de Rothschild holds the first place. It is thanks to her generous donation that the school has been able to be established in a building, the state of which necessitated many important alterations and repairs. This building is sufficiently large to accommodate thirty-four persons, twenty in separate rooms and fourteen in cubicles. It is also a home for the old pupils (private nurses) who are thus always able to keep in touch with the school. They pay a fixed sum for their board when staying in the house, but all their earnings are paid straight to them while they are private nursing, minus an indemnity of ten per cent. for the first three years, after which it decreases in proportion to the length of the engagement renewed by the nurse at the expiration of those three years. It is then on the coöperative basis that the finances of the school are established; and here again we find ourselves in accord with our English colleagues.

Let us then, to-day, when we are able, at last, to exchange with so many different countries those ideals which are dear to the hearts of all women, congratulate ourselves on the cordial understanding which exists between us; and may it continue to grow and extend for the greater benefit of all those to whom our lives are consecrated—the poor, the suffering, the infirm, all those who stand in need of our help and sympathy.

